

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 166112
ORIGIN INR-07

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 EB-07 TRSE-00 CU-02
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TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

S E C R E T STATE 166112

NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS

E.O. 11652:XGDS-2

TAGS: CH, UR, PBOR, EWWT, JA

SUBJECT: JAPANESE REPORT OF SINO-SOVIET AGREEMENT
ON BORDER RIVER NAVIGATION

REFERENCE: A MOSCOW 9613

B PEKING 1372

1. JAPANESE EMBOFF HERE HAS INFORMED DEPARTMENT OFFICERS
OF COMMENTS BY SOVIET AND PRC DIPLOMATS WHICH INDICATE A
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SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 166112

SINO-SOVIET AGREEMENT MAY HAVE BEEN REACHED RECENTLY ON
NAVIGATION AND CHANNEL DREDGING AROUND DISPUTED HEI-HSIA-
TZU (CHEMNAYA) ISLAND AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE
AMUR AND USSURI RIVERS OPPOSITE Khabarovsk. THE EMBOFF
EXPLAINED HE WAS PASSING ON THE SUBSTANCE OF STATE-
MENTS MADE BY THE COUNSELLOR OF THE SOVIET EMBASSY IN
PEKING TO HIS JAPANESE COUNTERPART ON JULY 13.

2. THE SOVIET COUNSELLOR REPORTEDLY SAID THAT AN AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED, UNDER WHICH CHINESE SHIPS COULD NAVIGATE AROUND THE SOVIET SIDE OF THE ISLAND VIA Khabarovsk, BY GIVING ADVANCE NOTICE TO THE SOVIET SIDE OF THE SINO-SOVIET JOINT COMMISSION ON BORDER RIVER NAVIGATION RATHER

THAN TO "SOVIET BORDER TROOPS" (THE JAPANESE WORDING), AS THE SOVIETS HAD PREVIOUSLY INSISTED. HE ADDED THAT THE AGREEMENT REQUIRES THE CHINESE TO INFORM THE SOVIETS OF THE PRECISE DATE AND HOUR OF THEIR TRANSIT AND TO ADHERE TO SOVIET NAVIGATION REGULATIONS. CHINESE SHIPS MUST TRANSIT THE CHANNEL DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS AND ARE PROHIBITED FROM TAKING ON OR DISCHARGING PERSONNEL DURING THE TRANSIT.

3. IN RETURN, THE SOVIET COUNSELLOR SAID, THE CHINESE HAVE AGREED TO PARTICIPATE IN A JOINT DREDGING OPERATION TO DEEPEN THE CHANNEL ON THE CHINESE SIDE OF THE ISLAND, WHICH IS UNNAVIGABLE DURING PERIODS OF LOW WATER. SO FAR, HE ADDED, ONLY THE NAVIGATIONAL PROVISIONS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED; DETAILS OF THE DREDGING OPERATION APPARENTLY REMAIN TO BE WORKED OUT.

4. THE AGREEMENT HAS BEEN MADE WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT DOES PREJUDICE EITHER SIDE'S TERRITORIAL CLAIMS,
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 166112

HE SAID.

5. WITH REGARD TO THE REPORTED CHINESE PROPOSAL (REFTEL A) TO RE-CONVENE THE JOINT COMMISSION'S ANNUAL MEETINGS, THE SOVIET COUNSELLOR SAID THAT ANY MEETING WOULD DEAL WITH ROUTINE TECHNICAL MATTERS AND COULD NOT BE CONSIDERED OF GREAT IMPORTANCE. THE JAPANESE EMBOFF HERE HAD EARLIER INFORMED DEPARTMENT OFFICERS OF SIMILAR DOWN-PLAYING OF THE PROSPECTIVE MEETING BY LI FENG-LIN IN MOSCOW WHEN LI SPOKE TO JAPANESE EMBOFF ORITA ON JULY 2. AT THAT TIME, LI REPORTEDLY STRESSED THAT THE MEETING WOULD BE "EXTREMELY TECHNICAL" AND HAVE "VERY LITTLE SIGNIFICANCE" FOR OVERALL SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS. VANCE

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